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ABSTRACT

Current facts concerning the teaching profession should be analyzed and acted upon. Most college students now studying to enter the teaching profession come from the bottom quarter of those taking the college entrance examinations. Schools and Colleges of Education are held in very low esteem on most campuses; therefore, when budgets are cut, they often suffer most. Many of the best teachers are leaving the profession for more promising work elsewhere. Taxpayers voting for "Proposition 13"-type legislation curb school finances and cut into the education budget. Many teachers' unions and education associations want equal treatment of their members; however, equality of unequals is the source of discontent coming from inside the teaching ranks. Viewed from the eyes of an ambitious, capable young person, teaching is a "dead end job." Teaching lacks a reward system for sustained effort. There are several ways in which the teaching profession can be renewed and revitalized. First of all, colleges and universities must give a higher priority to teacher education, make it a university-wide effort, and infuse more "academic rigor" into the curriculum. Secondly, more academically talented students must be recruited aggressively for the teaching profession. Thirdly, the current teaching system must be enhanced with a Master Teacher Program, which, unlike merit pay programs, offers the teacher a promotion and new title in addition to a salary enhancement. (JMK)

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SPEECH DELIVERED BY

T. H. BELL

U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

TOWARD REFORM AND REVITALIZATION OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION

JULY 11, 1983 — 9:00 A.M.

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. -- HOWARD JOHNSON'S OCEAN RESORT

SOUTH CAROLINA'S NINETEENTH ANNUAL

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' CONFERENCE

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I HAVE CHOSEN AS THE TITLE OF MY ADDRESS: TOWARD REFORM AND REVITALIZATION OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION. INDEED, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT AND THE MOST VITAL OF ALL THE PROFESSIONS IS FACING AN IMMINENT DISASTER IF WE DO NOT TAKE AGGRESSIVE ACTIONS TO CHANGE THE PATH DOWN WHICH IT IS NOW MOVING. HERE ARE THE FACTS -- UNPLEASANT AS THEY ARE; WE MUST RECOGNIZE THEM AND THEN WE MUST TAKE THE NECESSARY ACTIONS TO CHANGE COURSE:

1. MOST OF THE COLLEGE STUDENTS NOW STUDYING TO ENTER THE TEACHING PROFESSION (THERE ARE SOME EXCEPTIONS) COME FROM THE BOTTOM QUARTER OF THOSE TAKING THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS (SAT) AND (ACT).

2. SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES OF EDUCATION ARE HELD IN VERY LOW ESTEEM ON MOST CAMPUSES. MANY OF THE MAJOR RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES ADOPT AN UNDERSTANDABLE POLICY OF STARVING MEDIOCRITY AND FEEDING EXCELLENCE. SINCE SCHOOLS OF EDUCATION ARE VIEWED BY FACULTY SENATES AND UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS AS LACKING IN DISTINCTION, THEY ARE BEING PINCHED AND STARVED. THE EDUCATION OF TOMORROW'S TEACHERS IS NOT A HIGH PRIORITY ON THE CAMPUSES OF OUR MOST DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES. INDEED, ON TWO OF OUR GREATEST PUBLIC UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES, UNDER ENORMOUS BUDGET PRESSURES, THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN AT ANN ARBOR AND THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT BERKELEY HAVE HAD UNDER SERIOUS CONSIDERATION THE CLOSING OF THEIR SCHOOLS OF EDUCATION.

3. MANY OF THE BEST TEACHERS ARE LEAVING THE PROFESSION FOR MORE PROMISING WORK ELSEWHERE. THIS HAS BEEN HIGHLIGHTED WITH RESPECT TO MATH AND SCIENCE TEACHERS DURING CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON NEW LEGISLATION TO STRENGTHEN THESE FIELDS. BUT THE TEACHER BRAIN DRAIN IS MUCH MORE PERVASIVE. WE DO NOT HAVE COMPLETE DATA ON THE EXTENT OF THIS LOSS, BUT WE KNOW THAT IT COULD DEVELOP INTO A MAJOR CATASTROPHE.

4. TAXPAYERS VOTE FOR "PROPOSITION 13-TYPE" CURBS ON SCHOOL FINANCES. THEY OBJECT TO PAYING MORE FOR MEDIOCRE EDUCATION. SCHOOLS CANNOT REACH THE LEVELS OF EXCELLENCE DEMANDED BY THE PUBLIC WITHOUT INTELLIGENT, TALENTED, LITERATE, MOTIVATED, ENTHUSIASTIC, AND WELL EDUCATED TEACHERS.

5. MANY TEACHERS' UNIONS AND EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS WANT EQUAL TREATMENT OF THEIR MEMBERS. THE TAXPAYER INSISTS THAT ALL TEACHERS ARE NOT EQUAL AND SHOULD NOT RECEIVE EQUAL COMPENSATION FOR THEIR SERVICES. EQUALITY OF UNEQUALS IS THE SOURCE OF DISCONTENT COMING FROM INSIDE THE TEACHING RANKS. THERE IS NO NEED TO WORK HARD AND PERFORM WITH DISTINCTION IF THE FINANCIAL RECOGNITION IS INEVITABLY THE SAME.

6. VIEWED FROM THE EYES OF AN AMBITIOUS, CAPABLE, YOUNG MAN OR WOMAN TEACHING IS A DEAD END JOB. TEACHING AS A PROFESSION IS NOT OFTEN THE CHOICE OF THE HIGHLY MOTIVATED. THE USUAL ASPIRATIONS FOR THE "GOOD LIFE" INCLUDE SOME HOPE FOR A COMFORTABLE HOME, NEW AUTOMOBILE, AND SUFFICIENT FUNDS FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION AND RECREATION OF SPOUSE AND CHILDREN. MOST OF US ARE WILLING TO PUT OUT OUR HIGHEST EFFORT -- TO WORK LONG HOURS AND PERFORM TO THE OUTER LIMITS OF OUR ABILITY - IF THOSE REWARDS ARE THERE. BUT THE PLAIN TRUTH IS THAT THEY ARE NOT THERE FOR THOSE WHO CHOOSE TEACHING. CONSEQUENTLY, THE TALENTED AND HIGHLY MOTIVATED CHOOSE OTHER, MORE FINANCIALLY REWARDING ENDEAVORS. MOTIVATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN EDUCATION. WE HAVE FAILED TO RECOGNIZE THIS IN OUR TEACHER PERSONNEL POLICIES. WE LACK THE RECOGNITION AND REWARD SYSTEM FOUND IN OTHER PROFESSIONS. THERE ARE NO "PROMOTIONS" NOW IN TEACHING, JUST PERSONAL SATISFACTION IN SEEING OUR STUDENTS LEARN. THIS IS, IN ITSELF, A REWARD OF COURSE. BUT IT BEGINS TO WEAR AWFULLY THIN AFTER SOME YEARS ON THE JOB IN AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF DREADFUL SAMENESS WHERE WE TREAT ALL TEACHERS THE SAME REGARDLESS OF HOW HARD THEY WORK, HOW MANY HOURS THEY WORK, AND HOW SUCCESSFUL THEY ARE IN ATTAINING RESULTS. ALL TEACHERS WITH THE SAME YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND THE SAME NUMBERS OF COLLEGE CREDITS EARNED RECEIVE THE SAME SALARY IN NEARLY ALL OF THE 16,000 SCHOOL DISTRICTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

IN THIS COUNTRY WE VALUE FREE ENTERPRISE, INCREASED REWARDS FOR INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS. AND OUR PROUDEST BOAST IS THAT IN AMERICA THERE IS "UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITY" FOR THOSE WHO WILL TAKE RISKS AND WORK VERY HARD. THESE PROMISES AND IDEALS WE HOLD UP LIKE AN ENSIGN FOR ALL TO ADMIRE. BUT LITTLE, IF ANY CONSIDERATION WAS GIVEN TO THESE VITAL FACTORS AS WE ESTABLISHED OUR VERY STAGNANT SYTEM OF RECRUITING, EDUCATING INDUCTING, PROMOTING, AND REWARDING THIS NATION'S TEACHERS.

BECAUSE OF THESE SIX UNDENIARLY DREARY FACTS, THE AMERICAN TEACHING PROFESSION IS VERY, VERY SICK TODAY, AND IT WILL TAKE A LONG PERIOD OF INTENSIVE CARE TO BRING IT BACK TO HEALTH. WE HAVE ALL READ ABOUT THE REPORT OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION. WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE "RISING TIDE OF MEDIOCRITY". WE KNOW THAT THERE ARE MANY THINGS TO BE DONE IF WE ARE GOING TO CREATE THE CONDITIONS NEEDED TO ATTAIN EXCELLENCE IN OUR SCHOOLS. THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS EXTEND FAR BEYOND THOSE THAT WERE MADE CONCERNING TEACHING AND TEACHERS.

BUT WE MUST ALL UNDERSTAND THAT OUR ASPIRATIONS FOR AN EXCELLENT SCHOOL FOR EVERY ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY STUDENT IN AMERICA WILL NEVER - <u>I MEAN NEVER</u> - BE REALIZED UNTIL WE RENEW AND REVITALIZE THE TEACHING PROFESSION.

WE ARE SIMPLY AND SADLY FAILING TO ATTRACT OUR FAIR SHARE OF THE NATION'S TOP TALENT INTO TEACHING. WITH ONLY A FEW EXCEPTIONS, OUR MOST PROMISING POTENTIAL TEACHERS ARE CHOOSING BUSINESS, LAW, ENGINEERING, ACCOUNTING, COMPUTER SCIENCE, ARCHITECTURE, MEDICINE -- ANYTHING BUT TEACHING. THEN, WHEN WE HAVE THE GOOD FORTUNE TO ATTRACT A FEW - VERY FEW - GIFTED AND TALENTED YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN, THEY END UP LEAVING US IN DISILLUSIONMENT BECAUSE OF HOW THEY ARE PAID AND HOW THEY ARE TREATED IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS OF AMERICA. IN ALL THE RECENT ATTENTION GIVEN TO EDUCATION SINCE OUR COMMISSION'S REPORT WAS RELEASED, I HAVE NOT TALKED TO ANYONE WHO HAS NOT AGREED THAT THE KEY TO ANY MEASURE OF FUTURE SUCCESS IS CONTINGENT UPON ATTTRACTING INTO AND HOLDING MORE CAPABLE STUDENTS IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION.

FOLLOWING ARE MY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REBUILDING THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN AMERICA:

1. THE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES MUST GIVE A HIGHER PRIORITY ON THEIR CAMPUSES TO TEACHER EDUCATION. <u>IF THIS IS NOT THE FOREMOST RESPONSIBILITY OF A UNIVERSITY, IT IS CERTAINLY ONE OF ITS MOST SIGNIFICANT DUTIES</u>. TEACHER EDUCATION MUST BE A UNIVERSITY-WIDE EFFORT. NO BEGINNING TEACHER SHOULD LEAVE THE UNIVERSITY WITHOUT BEING WELL EDUCATED IN THE LIBERAL ARTS AND HUMANITIES AS WELL AS IN THE SPECIFIC FIELD IN WHICH THE NEW TEACHERS WILL BE TEACHING.

THERE MUST BE MUCH MORE ACADEMIC RIGOR IN THE CURRICULUM. THE RESULT MUST BE HIGHLY LITERATE, VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE, AND HIGHLY MOTIVATED TEACHERS WHO KNOW THEIR SUBJECT MATTER IN DEPTH. TEACHERS MUST BE SCHOLARS FIRST AND PEDAGOGUES SECOND! FOR TOO LONG, GENUINELY DISCIPLINED SCHOLARLY ACCOMPLISHMENT HAS BEEN SACRIFICED ON THE ALTAR OF PEDAGOGY. OF COURSE TEACHERS NEED TO KNOW HOW TO TEACH. AND THEY SHOULD HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE SCOPE AND SEQUENCE OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM, AND THEY NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EDUCATIONAL TESTS AND MEASUREMENTS, AND TEACHERS SHOULD INTERN OR PRACTICE TEACH UNDER A MASTER TEACHER, ETC. ETC.

BUT ALL OF THIS IS SURELY NOT OUR MAIN PRIORITY. FIRST, WE MUST PRODUCE A TRUE SCHOLAR WHO HAS ACQUIRED MASTERY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, WHO IS LITERATE, ARTICULATE, AND WELL GROUNDED IN THE LIBERAL ARTS. TO SACRIFICE THIS MASTERY OF SUBSTANCE IN ORDER TO MAKE ROOM FOR PEDAGOGY IS TO PRODUCE A TEACHER WITH ALL THE TEACHING TECHNIQUES -- A RICH BAG OF TRICKS, IF YOU PLEASE -- AND LITTLE SCHOLARLY SUBSTANCE.

THE PURPOSE OF TEACHING IS TO PRODUCE SCHOLARS AND LEARNED INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE INTELLECTUAL HERITAGE OF OUR NATION AND CIVILIZATION. TO PRODUCE A TRULY EDUCATED CITIZEN YOU MUST BE ONE YOURSELF. AND IF THE TEACHER IS TO TRANSMIT THAT LOVE OF LEARNING AND ENTHUSIASM FOR BOOKS AND IDEAS, HE OR SHE MUST BY DEFINITION HAVE ACQUIRED A MASTERY OF THE SUBJECT MATTER. SIMPLY LEARNING HOW TO TEACH WITHOUT MASTERING WHAT TO TEACH WILL PERPETUATE MEDIOCRITY INTO THE NEXT CENTURY.

DO NOT BE DECEIVED ABOUT THE SERIOUSNESS OF HIGHER EDUCATION'S NEGLECT OF TEACHER EDUCATION. JUST GET THE FACTS ABOUT TEACHER MINIMUM COMPETENCY EXAMS. IN MANY UNIVERSITIES, GRADE POINT AVERAGES IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ARE SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN IN OTHER COLLEGES (ENGINEERING, BUSINESS, LIBERAL ARTS) EVEN THOUGH THE SAT AND ACT SCORES ARE SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER. BUT THESE HIGH GRADE POINT AVERAGES IN OUR SCHOOLS OF EDUCATION CERTAINLY DO NOT REFLECT THE HIGH SCHOLARLY ACCOMPLISHMENT WE SEEK AND DESPERATELY NEED. THE PRORLEM OF QUALITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION HAS REACHED A POINT WHERE 17 OF THE STATES NOW REQUIRE AN EXAMINATION TO SCREEN, OF ALL THINGS, FOR MINIMUM TEACHER ACADEMIC COMPETENCE, WHEN IN REALITY WE SHOULD BE TESTING FOR MAXIMUM COMPETENCY OR MASTERY OF A FIELD OR SUBJECT MATTER AS IN THE OTHER PROFESSIONS.

WE NEED A VASTLY IMPROVED TEACHER EDUCATION NETWORK ALL ACROSS THE NATION. HIGHER EDUCATION MUST HELP US AT THE WELLSPRING OR ALL ELSE WILL SURELY FAIL. THUS, I LIST REFORM AND REVITALIZATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION AS THE FIRST STEP IN TURNING BACK THE TIDE OF MEDIOCRITY.

2. WE MUST AGGRESIVELY RECRUIT MORE ACADEMICALLY TALENTED STUDENTS TO CHOOSE TEACHING AS THEIR LIFE'S WORK. THIS WILL REQUIRE THE BEST EFFORT FROM ALL OF US.

A GOOD FIRST STEP WILL BE TO BUILD SOME ATTRACTIVE INCENTIVES INTO OUR COLLEGE STUDENT AID PROGRAMS WHERE WE OFFER STUDENT LOANS, GRANTS, AND WORK STUDY PROGRAMS TO HELP OUR YOUTH DEFRAY THEIR COLLEGE EXPENSES. I HAVE NO SPECIFIC PROPOSALS ON THIS, BUT I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT WE ARE LOOKING AT IT. WE SHOULD SOLICIT THE HELP OF OUR BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SECTOR. THEY CAN ASSIST WITH SCHOLARSHIPS AND OTHER AWARDS. ALSO, CIVIC CLUBS, CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, AND OTHERS WILL BE HELPFUL IF WE ACTIVELY SEEK THEIR ASSISTANCE. OUR HIGH SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES SHOULD ALSO ESTABLISH FUTURE TEACHERS OF AMERICA CLUBS TO HELP IN RECRUITMENT OF OUTSTANDING STUDENTS. EACH STATE AND EVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT SHOULD CONSIDER THIS MATTER OF RECRUITMENT. UNTIL WE ATTAIN LARGER NUMBERS OF ABLE STUDENTS CHOOSING TEACHING AS THEIR PROFESSION, WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SET REALISTIC ADMISSION STANDARDS TO SCREEN OUT THOSE WHOSE ACADEMIC RECORDS TELL US THEY OUGHT NOT BE IN TEACHING.

3. AS WE HAVE BEEN SAYING MANY TIMES, WE MUST ENHANCE THE CURRENT SYSTEM WITH A MASTER TEACHER PROGRAM. UNTIL WE DO THIS, WE WILL CONTINUE TO LOSE OUR BEST TALENT AFTER A FEW YEARS IN TEACHING AND WE WILL FAIL TO COMPETE EFFECTIVELY IN THE HUMAN TALENT MARKETPLACE. PLEASE NOTE THAT I USED THE TERM, <u>MASTER TEACHER</u> AND NOT <u>MERIT PAY</u>. THIS IS A DELIBERATE DISTINCTION ON MY PART. THE DIFFERENCE MAY BE A MATTER OF SEMANTICS TO YOU, BUT IT IS NOT TO MANY TEACHERS.

WE FACE MAJOR OBSTACLES IN STRIVING TO PAY TEACHERS WHAT THEY ARE WORTH. THE BIGGEST PROBLEM IS THE OBJECTION OF THE UNION OR EDUCATION ASSOCIATION ITSELF. I WANT TO SPEND THE REMAINDER OF MY TIME ON THIS MASTER TEACHER ISSUE. THERE IS MUCH MISINFORMATION ON THIS ISSUE AND WHAT WE HAD IN MIND WHEN WE FIRST PROPOSED IT TWO YEARS AGO.

FOR THE RECORD, I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE THAT I FIRST STARTED TALKING ABOUT THE MASTER TEACHER CONCEPT BACK IN 1981 WHEN I FIRST TOOK THIS JOB. IN ALL OF MY RHETORIC ON THIS SUBJECT, I HAVE FAILED TO EFFECTIVELY DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE MASTER TEACHER CONCEPT WHICH I REGARD AS A DIFFERENT APPROACH THAN THE OLD FASHIONED MERIT PAY CONCEPT. ADMITTEDLY, THE LATTER WILL BE BOTH ADMINISTRATIVELY AND POLITICALLY DIFFICULT TO ATTAIN WHILE THE FORMER IS RELATIVELY EASY TO ADMINISTER AND IS EMINENTLY MORE ATTAINABLE FROM THE POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE. THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THAT TEACHERS CAN BE PERSUADED TO SUPPORT A MASTER TEACHER PROGRAM, WHEREAS THE CHANCES ARE REMOTE THAT THEY WILL ACCEPT MERIT PAY.

SINCE I HAVE BEEN USING THE TWO TERMS SOMEWHAT INTERCHANGEABLY, I WILL DEFINE THEM:

1. MERIT PAY IS SYSTEM OF COMPENSATING TEACHERS ON THE BASIS OF OBJECTIVE MEASUREMENT OF PERFORMANCE WITH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS CARRYING THE MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR "MERIT RATING" THE TEACHERS.

2. A Master Teacher program is a system of establishing in our elementary and secondary schools the equivalent of academic rank which is now universally established in higher education, with emphasis on peer evaluation and recommendations for advancement.

Both systems evaluate teacher performance and both attempt to reward outstanding teachers with additional salary. The Master Teacher program offers a promotion and a new title in addition to the salary enhancement.

The administrative problems of measuring and objectively quantifying teacher performance in a system of evaluation where some numerical score is calculated are much more complex than a peer review system.

In the Master Teacher program, we create another position with a new title and a new career structure. We pattern our approach after the higher eduucation academic rank system. The Master Teacher is to elementary and secondary education what the full professor is to higher education. (The equivalent to the assistant professor is the beginning teacher with an initial two, three, four or five years of experience. The equivalent to the associate professor is the regular teacher who has completed the usual probationary period and has acquired the necessary academic credits.)

How do we select those to be advanced in rank to the position of Master Teacher? Let's look at higher education to see what we can learn. The first thing we note is that the system works. Indeed, it is hard to find a college or university without an academic rank system.

The faculty has a major role in the decision making process that selects the new full professor when there is a vacancy. This is known as peer review. A panel of peers, with some involvement of administration, reviews the files of all candidates in a given department. They discuss the qualifications, past performance and distinctive contributions to excellence of each of the candidates who have applied for advancement in rank. Using criteria that has been estarlished, and applying the best disciplined professional judgment that can be brought to the discussion table, the peer review panel makes its recommendation to the administration and through the Administration to the governing board.

The system is not perfect, but it works. It has these advantages:

1. It is difficult to play favorites and politics when a panel is used. One biased individual is offset by others who are more objective.

2. ACADEMIC RANK HOLDS OUT PROMISE FOR ADVANCEMENT OVER TIME TO THOSE WHO DISTINGUISH THEMSELVES WITH HARD WORK, TRUE SCHOLARLY ACCOMPLISHMENT, AND OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE.

3. THE FACULTY FEELS A PART OF THE PROCESS, AND IT REGARDS ACADEMIC RANK AS LESS DEMEANING AND MORE DEMOCRATIC THAN MERIT RATING.

4. AN OUTSTANDING TEACHER CAN LOOK FORWARD TO REMAINING A TEACHER WITHOUT HAVING TO - AS UNDER OUR PRESENT SYSTEM - MOVE INTO ADMINISTRATION.

IN EACH STATE IN THE U.S. THE GOVERNOR AND THE LEGISLATURE HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY IN THE MASTER TEACHER PROGRAM. IN ALL FUTURE INCREASES IN APPROPRIATIONS FOR SCHOOLS, A PORTION SHOULD BE SET ASIDE FOR MASTER TEACHER COMPENSATION.

IF WE ARE SERIOUSLY TRYING TO MAKE TEACHING A PROFESSION THAT ATTRACTS AND HOLDS THE BEST TALENT, THERE SHOULD BE NO ACROSS THE BOARD SALARY INCREASES FOR TEACHERS BASED UPON A SINGLE SALARY SCHEDULE THAT RECOGNIZES ONLY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND COLLEGE CREDITS EARNED. THE SINGLE SALARY SCHEDULE IS POSSIBLY A GOOD BASE FROM WHICH TO BEGIN BUT IT WILL NOT DO WHAT MUST BE DONE TO BUILD A TRULY GREAT TEACHING PROFESSION.

OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS MUST HELP US TO SOLVE THE TEACHER PROBLEM IN AMERICA. IT CAN BEGIN WITH OUR GOVERNORS. THE GOVERNOR, IN HIS OR HER BUDGET MESSAGE AND IN LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS, SHOULD BUILD INTO THE SCHOOL FINANCE STRUCTURE SPECIAL INCENTIVES TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS FOR MASTER TEACHER PROGRAMS. THIS SPECIAL FUND WILL HELP THOSE WHO SIT AT THE BARGAINING TABLE BECAUSE ALL THE MONEY WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE SIMPLY FOR ACROSS THE BOARD RAISES TO ALL TEACHERS.

WE ALL KNOW THAT WE NEED A SOLID, REASONABLY COMPETITIVE ENTRY LEVEL SALARY FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS. IN SOME CITIES GARBAGE WORKERS, POLICEMEN, AND FIREMEN HAVE HIGHER ENTRY LEVEL SALARIES. WE MUST PAY ALL OUR TEACHERS MORE FAIRLY AND COMPETITIVELY. BUT WE SHOULD BEGIN NOW TO CONSTRUCT THE MASTER TEACHER PROGRAM. TO THOSE WHO SAY THAT WE MUST NOT START THE MASTER TEACHER PROGRAM UNTIL WE INCREASE THE SINGLE SALARY SCHEDULE BY 25 OR 30 PERCENT, I RESPOND THAT THE KEY TO MORE PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION IS REFORM. AND THE MOST URGENT REFORM IS TO REBUILD THE TEACHING PROFESSION. WE MUST SHOW OUR WILLINGNESS TO TAKE THE BOLD STEPS AND WE MUST TAKE THEM NOW WHILE WE HAVE SUCH HIGH PUBLIC INTEREST AND SUPPORT. I DO NOT THINK IT IS TOO MUCH TO ASK FOR REFORM FIRST AND ADDITIONAL FUNDS LATER.

WE SHOULD MOVE TO IMMEDIATELY IMPLEMENT EVERY RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMISSION THAT DOES NOT COST MORE MONEY. OUR DEMONSTRATED DETERMINATION TO DO THIS WILL SHOW THAT WE ARE NOT ASKING FOR MORE OF THE SAME. THE PUBLIC EXPECTS THIS, AND WE CAN DO NO LESS IF WE ARE TO SUCCEED IN REVITALIZING THIS VITAL AND HONORABLE PROFESSION.

CONCLUSION

ALL OF US WHO KNOW AND CARE ABOUT THE TEACHING PROFESSION MUST "PITCH IN" TO AVERT THE DISASTER NOW FACING US. A VAST NUMBER OF ACADEMICALLY INCOMPETENT TEACHERS MIGHT WELL REPLACE THOSE WHO ARE LEAVING THE PROFESSION IF WE FAIL TO IMPLEMENT THE REFORM AND RENEWAL MEASURES NOW. JANUARY OF 1984 WILL BE A CRITICAL TIME FOR US. THAT IS WHEN THE LEGISLATURES WILL CONVENE. THEY WILL HEAR FROM THE GOVERNORS AND RECEIVE PROPOSED NEW BUDGETS. WE MUST BE READY WITH OUR REFORM PROPOSALS. AND FOREMOST MUST BE A PLAN TO ENHANCE AND REFORM THE TEACHING PROFESSION UPON WHOSE SHOULDERS SO MUCH OF OUR NATION'S FUTURE HOPES AND DREAMS DEPEND.

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